

Avalanche News

of the Avalanche Warning Service Tyrol

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Beware fresh snowdrift accumulations and full depth snowslides!

AVALANCHE DANGER

Due to snowfall since the beginning of the week, backcountry ski tourers and freeriders need to exercise increased caution towards potential avalanche dangers, at least in the southern parts of the land, in particular the regions along the Main Alpine Ridge from the Silvretta in the west to the Zillertal Alps in the east, as well as in East Tyrol. Avalanche prone locations in the form of freshly drifted slopes are currently easy to recognize, occurring most frequently above approximately 2400 m in shady, very steep terrain. At higher altitudes in areas adjacent to ridge lines, the danger zones can be found in all expositions. The frequency of danger zones increases with rising altitude in general. Thus, in high altitude glacial regions, the danger is highest; here, due to widespread avalanche prone locations, there is already considerable avalanche danger. In the regions with the most snow, especially in East Tyrol, on very steep, grassy slopes, caution is also urged towards the peril of full depth snowslides, which are triggered directly from the ground. This hazard applies more and more to intermediate altitudes.

SNOW LAYERING

At higher altitudes along the Main Alpine Ridge and in East Tyrol, particularly in the East Tyrolean Dolomites, winter has arrived. Above approximately 1800 - 2000 m there is generally a cohesive, area wide snowpack which is deepest on shady slopes. Potential weak layers for slab avalanches are currently to be found primarily in shady, steep terrain, where the old snowpack is already faceted. That means the snowpack near the ground consists of large sized, loose crystals, whose bonding to the layers lying atop it is poor in many places. In addition, up to about 2800 m there is a thin rain crust embedded inside the snowpack.

ALPINE WEATHER FORECAST (ZAMG-WEATHER SERVICE INNSBRUCK)

General weather: ongoing low pressure conditions. Today, a westerly air current will supply dry air masses to Tyrol. On Friday, the low over Italy will continue to draw cold air from the north. On Saturday, an intermediate high will make itself felt, bringing some foehn wind to north Tyrol. On Sunday and Monday, the next low over Italy will dominate again. Snowfall down to low altitudes. Mountain weather today: morning fog will shroud the peaks of the Northern Alps and the Main Alpine Ridge. It will remain dry in the mountains and very cold. Extensive cloudbanks above the summits will impede most of the sunshine, also in the Southern Alps. The southwesterly wind will increase in velocity this afternoon, towards evening it will turn cloudy again. Temperature at 2000 m: minus 8 degrees; at 3000 m: minus 15 degrees.

SHORT TERM DEVELOPMENT

The combination of low temperatures, anticipated snowfall and wind creates an adverse avalanche situation. Backcountry ski tourers and freeriders should consistently avoid freshly drifted areas in virgin, untracked steep alpine terrain for the next few days. New danger zones will be created in NE-E-SE expositions. The next report will be published as soon as there is a significant change in the situation.

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